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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR COMBAT COMMAND
LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, VIRGINIA

JUN 3 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: HQ ACC/A7P
129 Andrews Street, Room 317
Langley AFB VA 23665-2769

SUBJECT: Powder River Training Complex, Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

1. The United States Air Force (Air Force) is in the process of preparing an EIS to assess the potential environmental consequences of a proposal to expand and enhance the existing Powder River Complex (PRC) near Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB) SD. The proposal would create the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC). The PRTC would more effectively use limited resources and finite flying hours by providing locally the realistic training needed by B-1 and B-52 aircrews flying from Ellsworth AFB SD and Minot AFB ND, respectively. This airspace proposal addresses the training and other limitations affecting the existing PRC training assets as they are currently configured.
2. The proposed action would restructure and reconfigure the existing Powder River Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and associated Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspaces (ATCAAs). The PRTC proposal would establish two air refueling routes, create additional low altitude MOA (500 feet Above Ground Level [AGL] up to, but not including, 18,000 feet above Mean Sea Level [MSL]) and high-altitude ATCAA (18,000-60,000 MSL) combinations in portions of South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming and Montana. The proposal would support additional ground-based assets to simulate threats and an increase in aircraft training flights, permit the use of training chaff and flares, and authorize supersonic flight above 10,000 AGL. Three action alternatives and a no-action alternative have currently been identified for analyses and are discussed in the attached meeting brochure (Atch 1). All or portions of the following locations have the potential of being affected by the proposal's overhead training airspace due to one or more of the alternatives: **Montana**—Crow and Northern Cheyenne Reservations and the counties of Big Horn, Carter, Custer, Fallon, Powder River, Rosebud, Treasure, and Yellowstone; **North Dakota**—Standing Rock Reservation and Adams, Billings, Bowman, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Morton, Sioux, Slope, and Stark counties; **South Dakota**—Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Reservations, and Butte, Corson, Harding, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington, Perkins, Ziebach counties; and **Wyoming**: Campbell, Crook, Sheridan, and Weston counties.
3. Recognizing that open communication of issues is a critical element of the EIS process, the Air Force will host numerous public meetings in communities underlying and/or adjacent to the proposed action (Atch 2). The scoping meetings will be held in an open-house format, where Air Force representatives will describe the proposed action and alternatives, the National Environmental Policy Act process which we are undertaking, outline opportunities for public involvement, and answer questions on the proposal. The meetings will last from 4:00 to 7:00 pm

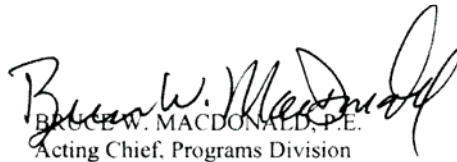
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at all locations, and interested parties or citizens are welcome to come at any time since information will be provided throughout the duration of the open house.

4. Meetings with public and agency stakeholders during this scoping process will help identify the full range of reasonable alternatives, potential impacts, and key issues throughout the environmental impact analysis process. The Air Force intends to coordinate public involvement for the purpose of Section 106 review under the National Historic Preservation with public involvement in the EIS prepared under this Environmental Impact Analysis Process. The Federal Aviation Administration has accepted the Air Force's request to be a cooperating agency for this action and has appointed the Central Service Area as their office of primary responsibility for this EIS.

5. The Air Force will accept comments at any time during the environmental process and any information you feel would assist us in this process would be appreciated. To ensure the Air Force has sufficient time to consider public input in the preparation of the draft EIS, information and comments should be submitted to Ms. Linda DeVine, HQ ACC/A7PP, 129 Andrews Street, Room 317, Langley AFB VA 23665-2769 by August 4, 2008.

6. If you have any specific questions about this proposal, please feel free to contact Ms. DeVine at (757) 764-9434, by electronic-mail at acc.prtc@langley.af.mil or contact the public affairs office at Ellsworth AFB SD, 605-385-5056. You may also obtain information including the two attachments to this letter, from our website at www.acplanning.org. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.


BRUCE W. MACDONALD, P.E.
Acting Chief, Programs Division

Attachments:

1. Scoping Meeting Brochure
2. Flyer

The National Environmental Policy Act guides the PRTC EIS.

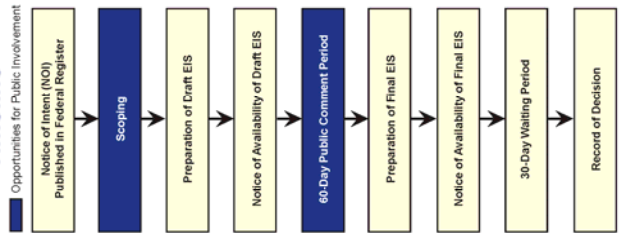
NEPA requires federal decision makers to consider potential environmental consequences of proposed actions and reasonable alternatives, including a No-Action Alternative in an EIS. The EIS complies with environmental regulations and documents potential impacts to the natural and human environment.

Resources initially identified for analysis in the EIS include (but are not limited to) the following:

- **Airspace Operations**
Airspace, Noise, Air Quality, and Safety (ground and air)
- **Natural Resources**
Physical and Biological Resources
- **Cultural Resources**
Cultural, Native American, Traditional, and Historic Resources
- **Human Resources**
Land Use, Quality of Life, Socioeconomics, and Environmental Justice



The EIS Process Timeline



Your input is essential to the environmental analysis process!

Providing Comments

To provide comments, please fill out a comment sheet. Please give your comments to an Air Force representative or place it in the comment box. Comment forms, or your own letter, may also be mailed to:

Ms. Linda DeVine
HQ ACCIA7PP
129 Andrews Street, Room 317
Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769

To ensure your comments are considered in the Draft EIS, please submit your comments before August 4, 2008.

Public comments on this Draft EIS are requested pursuant to the NEPA, 42 USC 4321, et seq. All written comments received during the comment period will be made available to the public and considered during EIS preparation. Your provision of private address information with your comment is voluntary. Your private address information will not be released in the EIS or for any other purpose, unless required by law. However, your private address information may be used to complete the mailing list for EIS distribution. Failure to provide such information will result in your name not being included on the distribution list.



Scoping Meetings for the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Welcome!

The United States Air Force is conducting scoping meetings for the PRTC EIS. The Air Force is preparing an EIS to determine the potential environmental consequences of a proposal to expand the Powder River Complex to create the PRTC. The PRTC would allow for more effective use of limited resources and finite flying hours by providing, locally, the realistic training needed by B-1 and B-52 aircrews flying from Ellsworth and Minot AFBs. The options being analyzed could:

- 1 Restructure and reconfigure the existing PRC Military Operations Areas (MOAs) and associated Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace (ATCAA) and add new MOA/ATCAA airspace with a floor of 500 feet above ground level (AGL).
- 2 Increase sortie-operations (aircraft training) in the new and modified training airspace.
- 3 Support additional ground-based simulated threat emitters under the MOAs.
- 4 Authorize use of training chaff and flares throughout the new and modified airspace.
- 5 Permit supersonic flight above 10,000 feet AGL.



Scoping meetings provide the public an opportunity to learn about the proposed PRTC and provide input into this environmental impact analysis process. The scoping process helps us identify and address community-specific issues and concerns regarding the proposed airspace use.

Meeting Agenda

- Open House.....4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- View video presentation
 - Visit information booths
 - Discuss proposal with Air Force personnel
 - Submit written comments

The Air Force is committed to community outreach and will consider your input to determine the scope of the issues to be addressed and to help identify the significant environmental issues to be analyzed in depth. Your involvement and input are vital to help us focus the environmental analysis.



Why is the PRTC Needed?

- Aircrews need adequately sized, configured, and available airspace to train as they fight during worldwide deployment.
- Increasing training in local airspace optimizes the limited amount of training hours allocated.
- Reducing commute time to remote training ranges like Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) reduces fuel consumption.
- Use of chaff and flares allows aircrews to deploy defensive countermeasures as they would in combat.
- Supersonic training assists aircrews to train for show of force and for quick reaction to enemy threats in combat.
- More effectively use limited resources and finite flying hours.



Please Attend!

**Scoping Meetings for the Powder River Training Complex (PRTC)
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB), South Dakota proposes to modify their training airspace.



Please attend a public scoping meeting to:

- Learn more about the proposal
- Provide community-specific input
- Be included on our mailing list



Public Scoping Meetings

Open House 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Public invited to attend at any time. Information will be available throughout.

South Dakota

Rapid City
Monday, June 16, 2008
Rapid City Public Library
610 Quincy Street

Belle Fourche
Tuesday, June 17, 2008
Community Center
(Dakota Room)
1111 National Street

Buffalo
Monday, July 14, 2008
Harding County Memorial
Recreation Center
West Allison Street

Bison
Tuesday, July 15, 2008
Bison School Cafeteria
200 East Carr Street

Wyoming

Sundance
Wednesday, June 18, 2008
Crook County Public Library
414 East Main Street

Gillette
Thursday, June 19, 2008
Campbell County
Fire Department
106 Rohan Avenue

Sheridan
Friday, June 20, 2008
Sheridan Senior Center
North Entrance
211 Smith Street

Montana

Hardin
Monday, June 23
Hardin Chamber of Commerce
10 E. Railroad Street

Colstrip
Tuesday, June 24, 2008
Isabel Bills Community
Learning Center,
520 Poplar Drive

Miles City
Wednesday, June 25, 2008
Miles Community College
2715 Dickinson

Ekalaka
Thursday, June 26, 2008
St. Joan of Arc Parish Hall
Church Street

Broadus
Friday, June 27, 2008
Powder River County District
High School
500 North Trautman

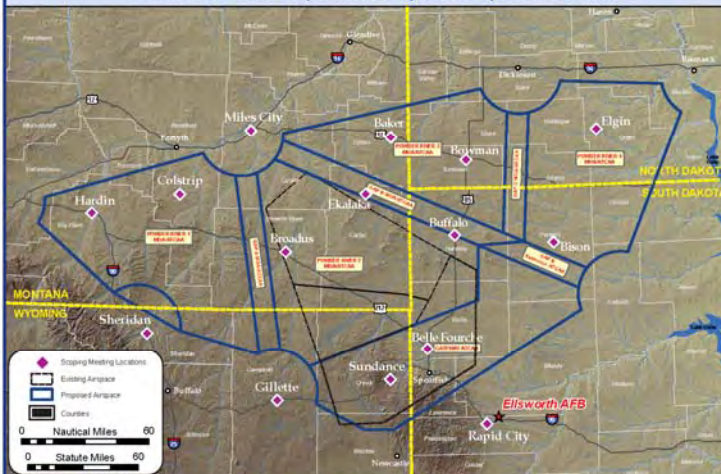
Baker
Tuesday, July 8, 2008
Baker High School
1015 South Third Street West

North Dakota

Bowman
Wednesday, July 9, 2008
City Hall Meeting Room
101 1st Street Southwest

Elgin
Thursday, July 10, 2008
Elgin Community Center
305 North Main Street

Ellsworth AFB Proposed Airspace Expansion Area



For more information about the meeting contact:

28th Bomb Wing
Ellsworth AFB, Public Affairs
(605) 385-5056

Send comments to:

Ms. Linda DeVine
EIS Project Manager
HQ ACC/A7PP
129 Andrews Street, Room 317
Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769

For additional information visit our website at www.acplanning.org

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Nadenicek Joe
SD Dept. of Environmental and Natural
Resources
523 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

James Boyd
ND Division of Community Service
PO Box 2057
600 E Boulevard Ave, Dept 105
Bismarck, ND 58502

Vicki McCusker
NPS Natural Sounds Program
1201 Oakridge Dr., Suite 100
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Chris Hanson
Bureau of Land Management
Buffalo Field Office
1425 Fort Street
Buffalo, WY 82834

Stephen Potts
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,
Region 8 - Montana Office
10 W 15th St, Ste. 3200
Helena, MT 59626

Barry Cooper
Federal Aviation Administration
Great Lakes Region
2300 East Devon Avenue
Des Plaines, IL 60018

Dennis Roberts
Federal Aviation Administration
Northwest Mountain Region
1601 Lind Avenue Southwest
Renton, WA 98057

Mary Sexton
Department of Natural Resources and
Conservation
1625 Eleventh Avenue
Helena, MT 59620

Gary Preszler
North Dakota State Land Dept.
1707 North 9th Street
PO Box 5523
Bismarck, ND 58506-5523

Everts Tom
Legislative Environmental Quality
Council
Room 171 State Capitol
PO Box 201704
Helena, MT 59620

Willie R. Taylor, PhD
Office of Environmental Policy and
Compliance
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 "C" Street NW, M/S 2342
Washington, DC 20240

Vi Hillman
Bureau of Land Management
Newcastle Field Office
1101 Washington Blvd
Newcastle, WY 82701-2968

Lonny Bagley
Bureau of Land Management
North Dakota Field Office
99 23rd Avenue West, Suite A
Dickinson, ND 58601

Gene Terland
Bureau of Land Management
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, MT 59101

Ron de Yong
Montana Department of Agriculture
303 N Roberts Street
Helena, MT 59620

Marian Atkins
Bureau of Land Management
South Dakota Field Office
310 Roundup Street
Belle Fourche, SD 57717-1698

Mark Baumler
Montana Historical Society
225 N. Roberts
PO Box 20121
Helena, MT 59620

Cheryl Kulas
ND Indian Affairs Commission
600 East Boulevard Avenue
1st Floor - Judicial Wing
Bismarck, ND 58505-0300

Karen Breslin
National Park Service, Intermountain
Region
12795 Alameda Pkwy
Denver, CO 80225

Patty Rooney
National Park Service, Midwest Region
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, NE 68102

Larry Svoboda
US Environmental Protection Agency,
Region 8
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202-1129

Elaine Raper
Bureau of Land Management
Miles City Field Office
111 Garryowen Road
Miles City, MT 59301-0940

Don Simpson
Bureau of Land Management
5353 Yellowstone
Cheyenne, WY 82009

Tom Tidwell
USDA Forest Service
Northern Region One
PO Box 7669
Missoula, MT 59807

Richard Opper
MT DEQ
1520 E Sixth Avenue
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Jeff Hagener
Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
1420 E 6th Avenue
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620

John Hoeven
North Dakota Governor's Office
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505-0001

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Roger Johnson
North Dakota Department of Agriculture
600 E Boulevard Ave Dept 602
Bismarck, ND 58505-0020

Steven Pirner, P.E.
SD DENR
PMB 2020
Joe Foss Building
523 E Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501

Steven Doohen
South Dakota Department of Military &
Veterans Affairs
Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building
425 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

Mary Hopkins
State Parks & Cultural Resources
Historic Preservation Office
2301 Central Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Karl Altenburg
North Dakota Wing Civil Air Patrol
PO Box 608
Bismarck, ND 58502-0608

John Etchepare
Wyoming Department of Agriculture
2219 Carey Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0100

Joe Moore
Wyoming Office of Homeland Security
122 West 25th Street
Herschler Bldg, 1st Floor East
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Mike Rounds
State of South Dakota
Office of the Governor
500 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Larry Kotchman
North Dakota Forest Service
Molberg Center
307 First Street East
Bottineu, ND 58318

David Freudenthal
State of Wyoming
State Capitol, 200 West 24th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0010

Jeff Vonk
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks
523 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Tom Dravland
South Dakota Department of Public
Safety
118 West Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Douglass Prchal
North Dakota Parks and Recreation
Department
1600 East Century Avenue, Suite 3
Bismarck, ND 58503-0649

Bruce Lindholm
South Dakota DOT
Office of Aeronautics
700 E Broadway Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-2586

John Cox
WYDOT Headquarters
5300 Bishop Blvd
Cheyenne, WY 82009-3340

John Corra
Department of Environmental Quality
122 West 25th Street
Herschler Building, 4th Floor West
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Terry Cleveland
Wyoming Game and Fish
5400 Bishop Boulevard
Cheyenne, WY 82006

William Even
South Dakota Department of Agriculture
523 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-3182

Mike Kintigh
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks
3305 W South Street
Rapid City, SD 57702

Roger Campbell
South Dakota Office of Tribal
Government Relations
Capitol Lake Plaza
711 East Wells Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-3369

Paul Schadewald
North Dakota Game and Fish
Department
100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, ND 58501-5095

Richard Benda
Department of Tourism and State
Development
711 E Wells Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-3369

Barry Bowersox
WYDOT
District 4
3540 Warlow Drive
Gillette, WY 82716

Tanner Shatto
Department of Environmental Quality,
Sheridan Field Office
1866 S Sheridan Avenue
Sheridan, WY 82801

Jim Boyd
North Dakota Department of Commerce
1600 E Century Avenue, Ste. 2
PO Box 2057
Bismarck, ND 58502-2057

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Melissa Bears
Town Clerk
PO Box 278
Hulett, WY 82720

Neiman Sawmill
Attn: Wes Bush
PO Box 218
Hulett, WY 82720

Wes Bush
PO Box 472
Hulett, WY 82720

Devil's Tower National Park
Dorothy Fire Cloud
Hwy 110 Bldg 170
Devils Tower, WY 82714